

# CHRISTIAN CENTURY

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## *E D I T O R I A L*

**T**WO DAYS after the fall of Rome, Allied forces launched their long-planned invasion of northern France. Since this issue must go to press within a few hours after the first announcement of the invasion, nothing can be said now as to the success of the landings.

### **France Is Invaded**

Initial reports are encouraging—as initial reports always are. But it will probably take at least another week to determine whether the Allies have gained a beach-head wide and deep enough to sustain the prolonged and desperate assault on Hitler's European fortress for which the world has been waiting. It appears, however, that this first attack has been concentrated against the Normandy coast. Evidently what the Allied commanders have in view is a drive along the old route up the Seine valley to Paris. Later there may be landings elsewhere along the European coast, but for the present General Eisenhower seems committed to a head-on slugging match directly across the channel from England's southern ports. It is to be expected that this will immediately be paralleled by another major advance on the part of the Russians. Thus between a coordinated assault from east and west, the United Nations hope to crack the Hitler nut before the end of this year. With military victory thus sought within the next six months, added importance attaches to the Allied conference on peace and postwar terms which is announced as about to open in Washington.

### **Rome Is Freed**

**R**OME has fallen many times in its long history, but never so gently as on Sunday, June 4, 1944. In fact, it did not really fall. Its Nazi occupants withdrew, too hastily to be able to do much damage, and the American and Allied forces moved in preparatory to moving on. The Italian capital became only a way station on the road to Berlin. This is not to belittle the political and psychological importance of the event, or to disparage the tremendous exertions of our troops which made possible the swift and almost painless operation of separating the Axis from a city which it had seemed to hold more as a

hostage than as a strategic military position. It required two weeks of intense and costly action to furnish the immediate preparation for that Sunday promenade into Rome. Rome was delivered from the Germans, rather than captured by the Allies. The immediate concern of the new military masters of Rome is to feed the people, and then to give them as much liberty as is consistent with their location so close to the fighting front. This has not been the customary way of Rome's conquerors. The reason for this unusual treatment lies in the fact that we are not taking Rome away from the Romans but are taking it away from the Germans to give it back to the Italians, who for nearly a year have been, somewhat lamely, our allies.

### **The Pope Also Is For Peace Now**

**I**T IS instructive to compare the pope's recent plea for a negotiated peace with the authoritative statement on the objectives of the Peace Now Movement presented in an article in this issue. So far as we can see, the pope is a Peace-Now-er in full standing. The pope made his argument in a speech delivered to the College of Cardinals on June 2, just as the Allied forces were about to enter Rome. It included an appeal for the safety of the city, but this was incidental to a much longer and more fully developed appeal for a speedy opening of peace negotiations. Admitting that there are "heralds of wisdom and moderation" in all the warring nations, the pope nevertheless warned that there is danger that those who insist on fighting to an unconditional surrender will simply convince their enemies that their only choice is between "a complete victory or complete destruction." If that happens, then there is likely to be born a "courage of desperation" among those doomed to defeat which will prolong the war endlessly and senselessly, until all belligerents find themselves going "on, as in a hypnotic sleep, through abysses of unspeakable sacrifice and constraining others to a war of extermination that drains their life blood, a war whose economic, social and spiritual consequences threaten to become the scourge of the age to come."



There will be those who will suspect a partisan interest on the pontiff's part in this call for peace negotiations now. But no such warning as Pius XII has given as to the consequences if the war is greatly prolonged can be dismissed lightly.

## Churchmen Favor Humane Treatment of Germany

WHAT TEST should be applied to proposals concerning the future of Germany? If a distinguished group of American churchmen have their way, the decisive question will be: "Will this policy prepare the German people for a constructive part in European life ten years from now or will its chief effect be to keep Germany a center of infection at the heart of Europe?" In a notable "Statement on the Peace Settlement in Europe with Special Reference to Germany," this group, which was appointed by the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace of the Federal Council but which speaks on its own authority, provides four principles on which the United Nations may build a constructive Germany. The first rules out revenge. Germany would be required to restore stolen property and to aid in rebuilding what her armies have destroyed. But there must be no long period of reparations, they declare. "The discipline of Germany because of the crimes she has committed should not be controlled by a spirit of vindictiveness but by concern for European recovery and peace." The second point opposes the proposed dismemberment of Germany into separate states but favors instead the inclusion of that country in a larger federation of European states. The third principle is that "our policy in dealing with Germany should be calculated to strengthen the forces inside Germany which are committed to freedom and international cooperation." The ten signers declare that they believe "millions of Germans have not been deeply corrupted by nazism" and that the cleansing of their national life should be primarily their own work. Finally, they hold that "while corrective and precautionary measures are taken to end the menace of nazism and militarism in Germany, efforts should be made to enable the people of Germany to find for themselves the necessary economic conditions for a good life." Signing the document are John C. Bennett, chairman, R. H. Edwin Espy, Harry Emerson Fosdick, William Ernest Hocking, Rufus Jones, William Allen Neilson, Reinhold Niebuhr, O. Frederick Nolde, Henry Pitney Van Dusen and Arnold Wolfers.

## Hate-Mongers Attack Policy of Decency

THIS churchmen's plea for decency has just been released, but it takes no prophet to foresee the drubbing it will receive from the American disciples of Lord Vansittart. Chief among these is Rex Stout, chairman of the War Writers Board, an affiliate of the Office of War Information. Mr. Stout, an author of detective fiction who has been charged with earlier Communist connections, signalized his attainment of semi-official eminence by writing an article entitled "We Shall Hate or We Shall

Fail," which was published in the *New York Times* last year. Ever since then Mr. Stout has championed the virtues of venom both personally and through his organization of 17 hand-picked writers. Because of the liaison his board maintains with official agencies, he has had direct access to all media of mass circulation. Recently he attacked the Council for a Democratic Germany, of which Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr is chairman, because that organization favors some consideration for a defeated Germany. In an advertisement which appeared in New York papers on April 22, he called all efforts to re-establish democracy in Germany a "booby trap . . . a device for Germany's escape. It is time to teach Germany and the German people the only lesson they apply to others, the only lesson they understand: force." With this propaganda of hatred and vengeance running unchecked throughout the country, dominating the press and poisoning the radio, it is high time it was boldly challenged. This the ten churchmen have done. They have rendered a notable service in behalf of a just peace. We trust that the circulation of their recommendations will not be limited to the relatively select circle which can be reached by the peace commission of the Federal Council, but that it will be widely and fully reported in the secular press.

## Presbyterians Frame Charter for Labor

THE WEALTHY northern Presbyterian Church is not one which might be expected to do much pioneering on "the church and industrial relations." Skeptics may see in the statement of the recent General Assembly on that subject (see page 728) nothing that looks like pioneering. We may be wrong, but we disagree. The 28-page report of the department of social education of the Board of Christian Education seems to us to be worthy to stand in the tradition of Delaware and Malvern. It confronts squarely the issues involved in the concentration of economic and political power, the orderly settlement of industrial disputes, the maintenance of maximum employment, the elimination of racism as a factor in employment and the expansion of democracy in industrial life. It is concerned, as labor is concerned, with economic insecurity, poverty, the failure of organized labor, and the repressions and tensions which may come after the war. It is not insensitive to issues over which management is worried: labor racketeering, the development of more capacity for self-criticism on the part of labor, the trend toward domination by government of union leadership and the postwar realignments which will be necessary. It recognizes that American history has to be taken into account in any restudy of the relationship between the church and labor, but it insists that industrial relations are always going to be bad unless the spiritual and ethical resources and insights of the Christian church are allowed to become a factor. Convinced that "the great majority of the membership and leaders of organized labor are sincere, conscientious and increasingly concerned with the welfare of the whole community," it declares that the church should join the forward-looking majority in strengthening the labor movement. It recognizes that

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